

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9394

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0061

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, PFOR, AR, US, CU

SUBJECT: GOA PREPARATIONS FOR MARCH MFM

SUMMARY: ON JAN. 3 EMBOFF CALLED ON AMB FIGUERERO, SECRETARY PRO
TEM OF MFM, TO INQUIRE OVER GOA PLANNING FOR THE CONFERENCE. FIGUERERO

SHOWED EMBOFF A CHART GIVING DATES FOR VARIOUS PORTIONS OF THE
MEETING AND DESCRIBED RULES GOA WOULD APPLY. (NOTE: HE DID NOT
PROVIDE EMBOFF WITH COPY, THUS DATES GIVEN BELOW MAY BE IN ERROR
BY DAY OR SO. A SCHEDULE WILL BE GIVEN TO DEPT BY ARTENTINA AND NO
RPT NO OTHER COUNTRY DURING WEEK OF JAN 6.) FIGERERO ALSO
GAVE CANDID APPRAISAL OF POTENTIAL PROBLEM AREAS (INCLUDING CASE
OF POSSIBLE CUBAN ATTENDANCE). HE DESCRIBED STEPS IT WAS TAKING
TO HEAD THEM OFF. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CONFERENCE WILL OPEN WITH A PRELIMINARY MEETING OF THE
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LATIN AMERICA FOREIGN MINISTERS MARCH 11-15.
THE REPRESENTATIVES WILL REVIEW THE PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS AND
SELECT ONLY TOPICS THEY DEEM FRUITFUL FOR ULTIMATE DISCUSSION WITH THE

SECRETARY. WHILE NATIONAL VIEWPOINTS RE TOPIC SELECTION WILL MAKE
FOR LIVELY DEBATE, GOA BELIEVES PRESSURE TO HAVE ITEMS READY FOR
LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS TO ACT ON WILL PRODUCE CONSENSUS.
ON 14TH AND 15TH REPS WILL ESTABLISH WORKING GROUPS TO PREPARE
FIRST DRAFT POSITIONS ON ITEMS SELECTED. REPS WILL CONTINUE TO
CONSIDER FURTHER ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON AGENDA AND POSSIBLE NEW
ITEMS WHILE WORKING GROUP PREPARDS DRAFTS. ON THE 17TH AND 18TH
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THE DRAFTS AND A SUGGESTED AGENDA WILL BE REFINED AND PUT INTO

THE FORM OF "RECOMMENDATIONS" FOR THE LA FOREIGN MINISTERS CAUCUS. WHILE LA FOREIGN MINISTERS ARE "PRIMA DONNAS" AND WILL NOT ACCEPT RECOMMENDATIONS WITHOUT DISCUSSION, FIGUERERO IS CONFIDENT THE PRODUCT OF THE MEETINGS ON THE 17TH AND 18TH WILL, IN FACT, BE APPROVED IN SUBSTANCE.

2. THE PRELIMINARY MEETINGS ON THE 11TH-15TH WOULD ALSO, AS IN TLATELOLCO, CONSIDER ANY PROPOSALS FOR NEW AGENDA ITEMS. THESE WOULD, IF ACCEPTED BY THE MAJORITY, BE PROCESSED AS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT A FUTURE MFM, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. THE LA FOREIGN MINISTERS WILL MEET FROM MARCH 20TH THROUGH THE 22ND. FOLLOWING OPENING SPEECHES AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, THEY WILL GO TO THE PLAZA HOTEL FOR TWO AND A HALF DAYS OF CLOSED-DOOR WORKING SESSIONS. HERE, ON THE ISSUE OF CHOOSING SPOKESMEN TO MANAGE THE TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THE SECRETARY, FIGEURERO EXPECTS CONSIDERABLE INFIGHTING. WITH FOREIGN MINISTERS PRESENT AND NO MORE THAN FIVE ITEMS EXPECTED TO BE APPROVED FOR ULTIMATE DISCUSSION

WITH THE SECRETARY, THE COMPETITION WILL BE OBVIOUS. (FIGEURERO EXPECTS THE ITEMS TO BE OAS REFORM, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, PANAMA, MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND TRADE.) WITH ARGENTINA OUT OF THE RUNNING AMONG THE BIG THREE (ARGENTINA, BRAZIL AND MEXICO), THE REMAINING TWO WOULD BE IN COMPETITION FOR ONE SPOKESMAN SLOT. THE CENTRAL AMERICANS AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES WOULD ALSO COMPETE FOR A SPOKESMAN ROLE, BOTH FOR THEIR AREAS AND AMONG THEMSELVES. THE MIDDLE FIVE COUNTRIES (VENEZUELA, PERU, COLUMBIA, CHILE AND URUGUAY) WOULD LIKEWISE COMPETE. TRADEOFFS IN TERMS OF GETTING "PLUMS" AT FUTURE MFM MEETINGS AND SIMILAR BARGAINS WOULD DECIDE THE ISSUE.

4. SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD MEET THE LA FOREIGN MINISTERS MARCH 24TH, 25TH AND 26TH. THE FIRST MORNING SESSION WOULD BE DEVOTED TO FOUR SPEECHES BY MRS. PERON, VIGNES, SECRETARY KISSINGER AND ONE LATIN FOREIGN MINISTER. THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN CLOSED-DOOR SESSIONS FOLLOWING THE TLATELOLCO FORMAT.

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5. WITH RESPECT TO CUBA, FIGEURERO ALSO DISCUSSED GOA VIEW OF HOW CONFERENCE WOULD PROCEED ON THE HYPOTHESIS THAT THE CUBANS ATTEND. IN FIRST INSTANCE, THEY OR SUPPORTERS COULD ATTEMPT TO RAISE DIVISIVE NEW ISSUES NOT ON AGENDA IN PRELIMINARY SESSIONS. THESE, IF THEY RECEIVED MAJORITY SUPPORT IN WORKING SESSIONS, WOULD BE REFERRED TO LA FOREIGN MINISTERS FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION IN A FUTURE MFM. THEY COULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE RAISED WITH THE SECRETARY IN BUENOS AIRES.

6. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE THAT THE CUBANS MIGHT TRY TO GET A SPOKESMAN ROLE ON AN AGENDA ITEM AT SESSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY. GIVEN INTENSE COMPETITION FOR THESE POSITIONS, FIGUERO DEEMED IT "A VERY REMOTE POSSIBILITY." ONLY WITH STRONG VENEZUELAN SUPPORT, SECONDED BY MEXICO, COULD CUBA EVEN HOPE TO GET A SLOT. GIVEN FACT THAT BOTH OF THESE COUNTRIES WANT TO PLAY STRONG ROLES AT CONFERENCE, GOA DOES NOT BELIEVE THEY WOULD SACRIFICE THEMSELVES OR THE CUBANS OR BE ABLE OR WILLING TO INDUCE OTHERS TO DO SO. THUS IN TERMS OF FORMAL CONFERENCE ROLE CHIEF SIGNIFICANCE WOULD BE FACT THEY ATTENDED.

7. FINAL POSSIBILITY FOR CUBANS TO CREATE MISCHIEF WOULD BE ON AFTERNOON OF CLOSING SESSION, WHERE UNDER MFM RULES ANY FOREIGN MINISTER CAN RAISE ISSUE CONCERNING US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS UNDER AGENDA ITEM 8.

8. WHETHER OR NOT CUBANS ATTEND, FIGUERO OFFERED TO CAREFULLY BRIEF EMBASSY AND SECRETARY'S ADVANCE PARTY FROM THE START ON DEVELOPMENTS AND ADVISE THEM ON POTENTIAL PROBLEM AREAS AS THEY ARISE. HE FURTHER STATED THAT HE "ASSUMED" SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD WANT TO ARRIVE ON THE 23RD TO MEET WITH SOME OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS PRIVATELY TO GET A "PERSON FEEL" FOR THE MOOD AND DIRECTION OF THE CONFERENCE.

COMMENT: FROM FIGUERO'S PRESENTATION, IT IS CLEAR THA GOA HAS THOUGHT THROUGH THE PROBLEM OF CUBAN ATTENDANCE CAREFULLY. EXCEPT FOR CLOSING SESSION ON ITEM 8 WHERE THE SECRETARY WOULD, IF NECESSARY, DEBATE THE CUBA ISSUE WITH COLLEAGUES BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, AND POSSIBLE ROA PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH THEY CANNOT CONTROL, GOA APPEARS TO HAVE LEFT LITTLE TO CHANCE. CUBANS ROLE IS SEEN BY GOA AS ONE OF PARTICIPATING IN FIRST INTER-AMERICAN FORUM SINCE 1964. THIS WOULD BE BOTH FOR GOA AND MANY OTHER

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LATIN AMERICANS A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE OVER THE IMPASSE CREATED BY QUITO AND COULD INSURE SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE. GOA, AS DOES EMBASSY, EXPECTS CUBAN ISSUE TO BE RAISED EVEN IF CUBANS DO NOT ATTEND. MANY FOREIGN MINISTERS WILL NO DOUBT PRIVATELY DISCUSS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER FORMULAS FOR ULTIMATE LIFTING OF SANCTIONS. HOWEVER, IF CUBANS ARE HERE, DEGREE OF EMPHASIS FOREIGN MINISTERS PLACE ON THIS ISSUE WILL BE IN LARGE PART DETERMINED BY THE BEHAVIOR OF THE CUBANS IN BUENOS AIRES.

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